

YEKUANA AND GOAJIRO KINSHIP

79

Twenty six fundamental kinship terms by which the Goajiro designate their relatives were recorded. Most terms are applied to more than one relative so that the system is classificatory in type. Among the Goajiro, kinship terms are almost exclusively used in reference, while in addressing a person *tekonyms* are employed, e.g.; *alshi plichi* - father of *plichi* (*al* - prefix, 3rd pers. sing. masc.; (*s*) *shi* - father; *plichi* - *baciro*). The term corresponds to a male person who is the father of a boy child. This practice of *tekonymy* presupposes the presence of personal names. Either sex can be given a name in remembrance of an event which occurred on their birthday, e.g., "the one of the full moon," "the one of the blossoms of that tree," "the one of the war between . . ." etc. More frequently, however, personal names differ from each other by sex. Boys are called after strong and wild animals, such as *baciro* (*plichi*), tiger (*kartira*), pig (*piriki*), wild cat (*midei*), while girls' names are ornamental and flattering, e.g., "brilliant one" (*harbet*), brownish one (*marlachong*), etc. 601 551

The *tekonymy* employed to address a person is derived from the name of the eldest son, and in default of sons, from that of the eldest daughter. Personal names are used in addressing unmarried persons. It is a disgrace, however, for an adult not to have children. Grandparents may be called by a *tekonym* referring either to a son or to a grandchild. [542]

Kinship terms are never employed in the forms as listed above, but only with possessive prefixes, e.g., *uashi* - my father; *pishil* - your father; *alshi* - his father; *alshi* - her father; *washi* - our father; *hashi* - your (pl.) father; *ashil* - their father. In the table, kinship terms are represented by their root forms. As a friendly gesture, people may address each other by general terms such as "brother," "sister," etc., or they may call any small child "son" or "grandchild." 601 [572] [576]

Of particular interest is the distinction the Goajiro make between "blood-relatives" and "flesh-relatives." Blood-relatives are all patrilineally related persons, whereas "flesh-relatives" are related to Ego through the mother's line. Kinship ties between flesh-relatives are considered to be stronger than those existing between blood-relatives. In practical life this would mean that Ego would have to help his maternal uncle in a fight against his own father. Among all kinsmen the maternal uncle possesses the greatest authority and his word counts most in all domestic affairs. Frequently, therefore, we find the extended family clustered around the household of the maternal uncle, which makes the Goajiro a matrilineal avunculocal society. Otherwise residence is matrilineal. Any one of the three *avuncular* relatives (maternal uncle), as listed in the table above, may replace the true maternal uncle in case of his death. But only his sister's children can be heirs of his possessions (including his wife or wives). 601 602 611 [604] [591] [764] [424]

TORTS AMONG THE GUAJIROS

157

father's relatives who would eat the meat and drink the rum⁵⁷⁴ immediately, a feast to which the mother's relatives might be⁶²⁶ invited as a gesture of courtesy. The offering of rum and⁶⁰² meat is voluntary, and even a friend may ask for something as⁶⁷² an indication of deep personal interest in the welfare of the injured person. If the injured man makes no offering, no action is taken by anyone to make him do so, but he will acquire a 'bad name.' A Guajiro has a moral obligation to avoid shedding his own blood, but not a legal obligation. Since the father takes care of his son during his lifetime, this obligation is directed towards him and his relatives, but is extended to include any good friend.

Another example of the same distinction is the case where a⁴³¹ son asks his father for a particular horse or object possessed by⁵⁹³ the latter, as a gift. The father is morally bound to grant the request, but there is no legal compulsion to do so. I gave a cacique a fine hunting knife which pleased him greatly. To my surprise his son was proudly wearing it the following day. On inquiring about it the cacique told me that his eldest son had asked for it. Had he refused to give it he would have⁶²⁶ been considered a bad father. The son inherits nothing from⁶²⁸ his father on the death of the latter, but while he is alive the son may beg anything within certain limits set by precedent. This moral obligation to give up a prized possession when⁶⁷² asked for by one's sons is extended to include close friends.

Allowing the Guajiro to make their own distinctions, let us⁶⁷¹ turn to a consideration of their 'laws.' The commission of certain acts, which in our society would give rise to criminal prosecution, in Guajiro society are considered matters to be settled by the parties concerned. Criminal law is practically non-existent. There is no body politic, properly speaking, that metes out punishment whether or not the injured party seeks redress, and social pressure can hardly be of any importance in a society that protects the individual through the instrument of family and caste membership. In only one case⁶²⁸ does there seem to be an approach to concerted social action.⁶⁸¹ If an individual has caused his family much trouble and is incorrigible, if his family has been called upon to pay for his mis-

611 In the following laws it must be borne in mind that it is not the
604 injured individual that demands compensation, but his relations, unless
628 on the mother's side as a rule. From this has arisen the common error
604 that the father is ignored; as will be seen farther on, this is not the
604 case. In compensation it is the mate that retains, and the mate is
always the mother's side. For example, a Puelina man marries an
Uricana girl; the children are Uricana. If one of these now should kill
an Epleya, for example, the whole mate of Uricana is at war with all the
Epleyas, unless the mother is amply satisfied by paying blood-money.

672 Case No. 1. Personally inflicted wounds. If an Indian accidentally
683 cuts himself, say with his own knife, breaks a limb, or otherwise does him-
self an injury, his family on the mother's side immediately demands blood-
money. Being of their blood, he is not allowed to spill it without paying
for it. The father's relations demand tear-money, not so much. Friends
present demand compensation to repay their sorrow at seeing a friend in
pain. If anybody present can seize the instrument that caused the
accident it is appropriated. The pay is in ratio to the injury. A slightly
cut finger is settled with a little Indian corn, a kid, or such trifle. A
bad cut requires at least a goat or a sheep, with other amenities. In all
cases of compensation where the Indian has not the wherewith to satisfy
his creditors, he goes round begging until it is obtained.

628 Case No. 2. Damage done by animals. Suppose an Indian borrows a
male or other animal, and is thrown by it, doing himself badly injury.
672 Then his relations demand compensation from the lender, the argument
683 being, had he not lent the animal the accident could not have happened.
Should the beast belong to the thrown man himself, then he has to pay.
Case of No. 1 is first.

Case No. 3. General liability all round. This covers an enormous
field. The most curious. Everybody selling ruin or anything else is
accountable for all the damage done by its instrumentality. Unfortunately
this law is only, like many others, enforced when it is possible. As the
traders know it very well, they never take men into the interior for
hunting without being fully able to protect themselves. I was lent a
servant as guide by a trader, who requested me not to let the man leave
any drink, for should anything happen to him he would be responsible
to the family. Indians in employment receiving any damage the em-
ployer becomes liable; and so on. Whenever the Indian can only make
the ghost of a claim he wants tear-money, blood-money, or some other
money, and if not satisfied, helps himself with what he can lay his
hands on.

551 Case No. 4. Misting names. This is very curious. The Indians
628 object to have their true names mentioned, and demand heavy com-
683 pensation in aggravated cases. They generally go by a Spanish name—
Joa Antonio, Agustin, Vicente, &c., for an Indian surely loves to be
baptized, that is, he likes the attending feast and having gold-fillets on